

Dear Commissioners:

Stop hidden phone fees so I can truly compare prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations. CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue.

Phone bills should be truthful and easy to understand. Phone companies have STRATEGIZED OUTRIGHT TO KEEP THE TRUE COSTS OF PHONE BILLS SECRET from their existing and potential customers. -- And they have devised schemes to ensnare you into using their services by NOT explaining the true breadth of service agreements. This is NOT in the interests of their customers by any means. Furthermore, they (Qwest, in my case) have made it impossible to discuss services with anyone who is intelligent enough to explain company policy or the cost structure. I can say the same for ComCast for Internet services. Obviously, without litigation or legislative directives, they will have no incentive to be fair and informative as is the obligation of most other industries -- who do NOT even have a monopoly in their business areas. Please vote to require communications companies of all regulated kinds to provide proper information, obligation and services that are straight forward and total devoid of deceptive practices.

Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the amount of the check I have to write each month to pay the bill. Competition will not work if consumers cannot accurately compare prices when shopping for service.

Many states are stepping up to address this problem. They should be allowed to proceed. However, the FCC shouldn't shirk its responsibility, nor limit states from doing more.

The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate billing practices, and prohibit phone and wireless companies from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.